

I am writing to urge the FCC to reject the National Association of Broadcasting's petition 04-160 to stop XM Satellite Radio from offering instant traffic and weather reports.

My wife and I are truck drivers based out of North Carolina. XM's instant traffic and weather is an essential part of our jobs, alerting us ahead of time to weather and traffic problems in many of the cities we go through on a daily basis. I understand that the NAB considers these broadcasts to be local programming. I disagree. We listen to these weather and traffic reports long before we are in range of local broadcastings stations, and often alter our route according to developing problems. Quite frankly, if we waited until we were in a certain area to tune in to local programming for traffic and weather, that local programming would be useless to us, as we would already be in the area.

In closing, I want to mention that my wife and I drove through many sever thunder storms in and around the Chicago area yesterday. Thanks to XM's instant traffic and weather reports, we were aware of these developing weather patterns while we were still in Kentucky. Had we been forced to wait until we were in the Chicago area to learn more about the severity and locations of these storms, we might very well have driven into one of the many tornados that went to ground in Northern Indiana last night. XM Radio allowed us to be well prepared for those storms in Indiana and Illinois, and I fail to see how local programmers were affected in the least by our use of XM Radio.

In my opinion, the National Association of Broadcasters' assertions have no merit. I strongly urge the FCC to consider the larger picture in this issue, and I beg them to not allow themselves to get bogged down by the NAB's pointless hysteria. I might point out that the National Association of Broadcasters tried to stop television and FM radio. I shudder to think about what the absence of those technologies would mean to our culture and the public dialogue.

XM Radio's Instant Traffic and Weather is an important service, and one that was greatly welcomed by its subscribers. And please keep in mind that XM Radio's customers have paid for this service. If local progamming was capable of alerting me to problems in Chicago while I was still in Kentucky, I might not consider XM's service to be so indispensable. But they can't provide such a service. Therefore, I consider their petition to be frivolous and without merit, and I am ashamed of Representatives Pickering and Green for introducing such a ridiculous bill.

I urge the FCC to reject petition 04-160. I fail to see how the public interest can be harmed by more diversity and programming, and can only assume that this is a ploy by powerful lobbyists to further consolidate their power, influence, and corporate bottom line.